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journal or publication title	Seigakuin University General Research Institute Bulletin
number	No.61
page range	8-8
year	2016-03
URL	http://id.nii.ac.jp/1477/00001972/

Abstract

Word Order and Parataxis in Ælfric's *Old English Heptateuch*

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The Old English Heptateuch was composed by Ælfric during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. The original texts of Crawford and Key (1969) are mainly British Library MS. Cotton Claudius B IV (MS. B) and Bodleian MS. Laud (MS. L) were written in the late eleventh century. Crawford indicates that Cambridge University Library MS. li 1. 33 (MS. C), which was written in the twelfth century, contains a part of the text that differs from that in MS. B and MS. L.

This paper investigates, in particular, the word order in main clauses, introduced by the coordinate conjunction and through comparison between MS. B and MS. C. The treatment of the construction of main clauses that accompany and in the sentence-initial position seems to have been disregarded in previous studies of word order in Old and Middle English. The author concludes that sentence-initial and should be counted as the first element of V2 word order in Old English, whereas it should not because subject pronouns have already become full nominals by decliticisation. It can be assumed that, if we analyse the initial and in main clauses, MS. C uses SV word order in many sentences, whereas MS. B uses V2 word order in the parts of the texts that differ between the two manuscripts.